

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

BRITISH NATION.

Thursday, September 22. 1709.

I Did as good promise you one *Review*, tho' it were a Digression, upon the Difference between the real and imaginary Greatness of Princes, and that vain Thing in our modern Phrase call'd Glory, and I must pay the Debt.

Here's a Monarch raises Armies, invades his Neighbours, oppresses Kingdoms, destroys Governments, and becomes terrible to Mankind; and *this is call'd Glory*. He's a great Man, gets the Title of *Immortal*, *Invincible*, the *Conqueror*, the *Thunderer*, the *Great*, and the like— Just thus is King *Lucifer* be-

come terrible—The *Devil* is as *Immortal*, as *Invincible*, as *Terrible* as any of them all, and merits as much as any of them, in great Names, triumphant Titles, and accumulated Victories—Will ye call mighty Oppressions, inexpressible Devastations, and invincible Injuries by the Nick-Names of Merit? Are these Glory? Then all the Tyrants and Destroyers of the World, Enemies of Mankind, and Insulters of Heaven, are Men of Glory; Hell is the Fountain of Praise, and *Satan* ought to be call'd *Lucifer Le Grand*.

Crime

Crime makes no Man Great, unless you will say, 'tis Great to be a great Rogue, 'tis Glorious to be a Robber, a Spoiler, a Boutefeu, a Destroyer, and an Enemy of Mankind—— Thus the Devil is call'd THE GREAT, the Powerful, and might perhaps merit Laurels and Triumph; He and Louis le Grand *much upon the same Foot*, for illustrious Mischiefs, glorious Distractions and Disorders committed against the Peace of Mankind, Temporal and Eternal, adorn them both.

How wretchedly are the Men of these Days mistaken, when they speak of Greatness and Human Glory in this World—— As if to be terrible to their Fellow-Creatures, insolent to their Maker, and brutal in their Excesses, were to be Great. True Grandeur consists in Vertue, in the Pursuit of Truth, in erecting Justice, trampling down Oppressions, vigorously struggling with encroaching Crime, dethroning Tyrants, protecting the Liberty of Nations, and restoring ravish'd Right, to injur'd People. This is Glory, and where a Monarch makes this his Business, *he is truly Great*; all the rest is Flattery and Folly, ridiculously absurd, below Men of Honour to accept, or free Nations to give.

Is it Grandeur and Glory to break Leagues, oppress Kingdoms, dispossess Princes of their Rights, and Nations of their Liberties? Is it the Glory of a Prince to subject his own People to his absolute Pleasure, and make Free-born Subjects, Slaves? Is it his Honour to ruin his Country, to support his Triumphs, to starve his peaceable Subjects to feed and subsist his Armies, and to strip his Native Subjects, who, in one Kelpet, are his Family and his Children, to cloath Mercenaries?

Peace is the Glory of a Crown, and under the Shade of which constantly flourishes Truth, Liberty, and Plenty; he that fights for Peace, makes War with Honour; if he conquers, he merits Triumph; if he falls, he dies with Satisfaction; and if he is conquer'd, he falls with more Glory than his Conqueror can triumph with. The Principle of every Action in the World denominates the Action — If it is founded on Justice, aim'd at Peace, and pursu'd with Truth, it is then just, honourable, and truly glorious; but to talk of Glory, when the Lawrels are handed by a bleeding Nation, Honour founded on Injury, and War made for meer Conquest; this is all Blood, Rapine, and cruel robbing Mankind; such Monarchs are Thieves to their Fellow-Creatures, and vile Usurpers of that Dominion, GOD in the original Design of Government never bestow'd on them.

And where does this voracious Humour of Mankind generally end? Mighty Princes gratifying their own Lusts, oppressing their own Subjects, invading Neighbours, crushing the weaker Princes round them, adding Kingdom to Kingdom, and Conquest to Conquest, grow Emperors, load themselves with magnificent Titles, and gorgeous Triumphs; and where does it end, where has it always ended in the general Course of Divine Providence in the World? — Behold the common Fate of such Men, they grow intolerable and unsufferable to the World, Mankind abhors them—— The Nations, weary'd with their insults, form strong Confederacies to defend themselves against their encroaching growing Power; or their own People, made desperate by their Oppressions, take

take Arms in Defence of the common Right, and of their natural Liberties, like a Horse, that, press'd by his unreasonable Rider beyond his Strength, turns *restive*, and being gall'd with the Spur, kicks and tosses off the cruel Load, under which he can no longer live.

Search all the over-grown Monarchies of the World, from *Sardanapalus* to *Lewis XIV.* where Princes have run these Extremes of Tyranny over their own People, or Encroachment on their Neighbours; and History will inform you, that one of these two has always been their Fate; the *Persian*, the *Grecian*, the *Roman* Empires have sunk by these Means, and the *French* is falling by the same Method.

How vain then are all the Attempts of ambitious Men to aggrandize themselves by Conquests? While Reason has a Place in the Minds of Men, it will first or last put Weapons in the Hands of injur'd Nations, to do themselves Right— Let any Man look back upon the long Reign of *Lewis XIV.* with but this one Observation— And let them state the Account of all his Glory, and see what he has to put into the Ballance.

Let them place to his *Credit* all the Conquests of 50 Years, a long Reign of Toil and Labour; the Kingdoms he has won, the People he has subjected, the Towns he has taken, and the many Battles he has fought with Glory and Victory. It is certain, that these are great Articles, such as have loaded him with accumulated Glories, for which he has gain'd the Title of Great, Invincible, Immortal, and the like. In these Triumphs he began to grow old—and no doubt promis'd himself, like the Sun, to set in Brightness, to shine to the last

Minute—and, *when set*, to gild the Edge of the Horizon with the beautiful Colours of a Summers Evening.

But now take his Debtor Side, and see how all this comes Even again, and place it to his *Debit*—His eager grasping at new Kingdoms, in Hope of universal Empire, and failing in the vain Attempt—to the exhausting his infinite Treasures amass'd from his oppress'd People; then add the Confederacy of all the Nations round him, alarm'd at his vast Designs, and engag'd in Interest to reduce his Power, in order to protect themselves from his Invasions—Enrag'd to be thus chequ'd in his Career, he fights the whole World, raging like a wild Bull in a Toil—but faints in the fruitless Attempt; he that was too strong for all the World, separated and apart, finds himself overmatch'd when they unite in attacking him—And being beaten in five dreadful Battles, two of which were enough to have overwhelm'd the *Roman* Empire—He now offers to buy his Peace with surrendering his Conquests, disgorging his evil-gotten Goods, abandoning his unjust Confederacies, pulling down his impregnable Barriers, and, in short, is content to end, *just where he began*.

Has he not danc'd now these 50 Years in a Circle? — And if he dies the same King of meer abstracted *France*, that at 8 Years old he began to be, 'tis the favourable Circumstance of *Europe's* divided Interest that he owes it to, not his own Power or Ability to defend himself; were he fighting against a single Monarch, and reduc'd thus low, he must have fallen without Recovery; but as we are confederated Powers, and have respective Interests, we fight for Peace, and not for Conquests;

queirs ; and therein lies the King of France's Safety.

But to return to the Account Current of the French Affairs, having offer'd by the late Preliminaries to restore all his

Usurpations and Encroachments, the Account stands just Even, and he may draw a Line cross the Whole—With this written under it.

Lewis XIV. Anno 1660— Cr.

By Dominions won——

Ballance——

Lewis XIV. Anno 1709— Dr.

To Dominions restor'd——

Nothing.

What the Demand may be upon him, for Millions of Money extorted from his miserable Subjects, whom he has reduc'd to the last Extremity, in Defence of that vain Thing call'd Glory—What, for an infinite Number of People murder'd and lost in the furious Pursuit of his Ambition—What, for the Devastation of Kingdoms and Nations round him ; These are black Accounts, no Body can make up for him——And which he is like to have Leisure to consider of ; I have nothing to do with that.

But as to Conquest, Glory, Acquisition, and Encrease, either of Dominion or of Power—— I think, the King of France has made the blindest Bargain that ever Monarch did—He has gain'd Honour, and lost it all ; he has amass'd Treasure, and spent it all ; he has made Conquests, and offers to restore them all ; he has reign'd long, and in Effect done nothing at all.

Such is the End of the Ambition and Pride of Princes.

*To say such Kings, LORD, rule by Thee,
Is most prodigious Blasphemy.*

And. Marvel's Sat.

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